Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-5. (canceled)

6. (new) A method of optimising connection set-up times between nodes in a centrally controlled network, comprising:

sending a path set-up request from a node to a controller; and

sending an acknowledgment message from the controller to the node, only when a network connection has been established.

7. (new) The method according to claim 6, further comprises providing a queuing system at the node, the queuing system designed such that packets received at the node while awaiting for the acknowledgment are discarded.

8. (new) The method according to claim 7, wherein the packets are based on an Internet protocol.

9. (new) The method according to claim 7, wherein the queuing system has a scheme selected from the group consisting of: first in first out (FIFO), last in first out (LIFO), and weighted fair queuing (WFQ).

10. (new) The method according to claim 9, wherein the WFQ scheme selectively dismisses packets having a lower priority in order to store more recently arrived IP packets having a higher priority.

11. (new) The method according to claim 10, wherein the packets are based on an Internet protocol.

12. (new) The method according to claim 6, wherein the network is an optical network.

13.   (new) A method of optimising connection set-up times between nodes in a centrally controlled network, comprising:

receiving a path set-up request by a controller from a node; and

sending an acknowledgment to the node when the connection has been established once resources are available,

whereby the controller no longer sends a negative acknowledgment to the node since the controller waits for the resources to be available.

14.   (new) A method of optimising connection set-up times between nodes in a centrally controlled network, comprising:

sending a path set-up request from a node to a controller; and

receiving an acknowledgment message from the controller by the node after a network connection has been established,

wherein a single path set-up request is used to establish a connection even when resources are initially unavailable,

whereby multiple path setup request are no longer needed since the controller does not send a negative acknowledgment but waits for resource availability.

15.   (new) The method according to claim 14, further comprises providing a queuing system at the node, the queuing system designed such that packets received at the node while awaiting for the acknowledgment are discarded.

16.   (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the packets are based on an Internet protocol.

17.   (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the queuing system has a scheme selected from the group consisting of: first in first out (FIFO), last in first out (LIFO), and weighted fair queuing (WFQ).

18.   (new) The method according to claim 17, wherein the WFQ scheme selectively dismisses packets having a lower priority in order to store more recently arrived IP packets having a higher priority.

19. (new) The method according to claim 18, wherein the packets are based on an Internet protocol.

20. (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the network is an optical network.